

VZCZCXYZ2390
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHMS #0183 0630613
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 030613Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9329
INFO RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS MUSCAT 000183

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, EEB/CBA
COMMERCE FOR ITA THOFFMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [PGOV](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: TENDER BOARD REITERATES COMMITMENT TO FAIRNESS

¶1. On February 25, POLE Assistant attended a presentation by Zahir al-Rashidi, Oman Tender Board Quantity Survey Specialist, concerning the tendering process and its requirements for the pre- and post- tendering phases. With regards to pre-tendering, Rashidi stated that the Tender Board works with relevant ministries to identify client needs and specify tender conditions, including local content specifications and Omanization requirements. On the post-tendering phase, Rashidi highlighted the Tender Board process for advertising for bidders, as well as for publishing newspaper announcements.

¶2. Rashidi noted that the Tender Board focuses on ensuring adequate time for tender document submission and for responses to queries from prospective bidders. Answers are distributed to all participating bidders in the form of an addendum, which also points out any changes to be included in the tender documents. With respect to the evaluation process, Rashidi stated that the Tender Board gives more preference to companies with the most number of Omani employees; firms also receive an additional 10% "score" for representing local products.

¶3. In tailoring his presentation to the local audience, Rashidi emphasized several important characteristics of winning tenders, including: compliance with specifications and requirements; company reputation; completeness of the documents submitted; competent pricing; percentage of Omani employees; and the number of local products included in the company's bid. He further commented that firms should review their tender packages carefully for any discrepancies that might call into question the validity of the bid. Finally, Rashidi assured the audience that, given the Tender Board's mission of achieving fairness, transparency, and promotion of local products, Omani companies are provided an equal opportunity for government business on local tenders over 250,000 Omani rials (USD 650,000). (Note: Ministries are able to tender internally for projects under this amount. End note.)

¶4. Comment: Rashidi's presentation was part of an "Origin Oman" campaign sponsored by the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (PEIE). The campaign is designed to promote Omani products and services, with the principal objective of encouraging consumers, buyers, and corporations to embrace the "Made in Oman" label. PEIE hopes to create employment opportunities and stimulate the local economy through a series of "Origin Oman" seminars to educate budding small and medium size enterprise (SME) operations on how to compete for business against stronger, more established competitors. End comment.
GRAPPO